

@919 Today!

April 2010



Winemaker's Notebook

Eric Semmler, Winemaker, 919

Well, the 2010 vintage is officially over. The last of the red wines are fermenting in the cellar and the aromatic smell of the fermenting wine fills the nose when walking into the winery. Several frosts over the last week have brought out attractive autumn rust colors on the vine leaves in the vineyard as the vines prepare for their winter rest period. How quickly the seasons pass! We are just finishing vintage and by mid June, pruning will be under way in the vineyard.

This vintage has produced some of the highest quality wines that we have produced to date from 919. White wines: Savagnin, Vermentino and Petit manseng all exhibit attractive aromatics along with crisp fruit flavours and fullness on the palate.

Our reds are this year benchmark examples of wines from this region. Tempranillo is fragrant and cherry-like with elegance and concentration. Durif is big, bold, rich in plum and spice with inky color and huge concentration on the palate. Our shiraz also has inky color and spicy, peppery fruit on a textural palate.

Inside this issue

1

Winemaker's Notebook

2

The name behind the label

3

Recipe: Gourmet pizza

4

Competition

4

Event calender

Continued p 3

The name behind the label

Jenny Semmler

Organic certification @ 919

You may be aware that 919 Wines recently achieved certification as an organic processor. This means our winery is certified to process wines by organic methods as well as using conventional methods. Our vineyards have undergone their first audit on the journey to biodynamic certification of our fruit. So what does this all mean?

Our vineyard was set up with a view to ensuring environmental and ecological sustainability, so we have always minimized the use of sprays to produce our fruit. We have always been careful to reduce the risk of pests and diseases in our vineyard by alternative methods, such as by canopy management to reduce the risk of mildews, and by employing a variety of strategies to reduce bird peck (some more successful than others) such as using scarer tape, attracting local bird predators etc. Our soils are nurtured through the application of mulches and organic green manures, and we have attempted to minimize water use through low volume irrigation, mid-row cover crops and soil mulches. Weeds are physically removed by hand weeding whenever possible (to avoid compacting the soil with the tractor), and also by competition with “friendly” plants.

As you can imagine, sometimes there are competing requirements. For example if we have a caltrop outbreak we might just have to bite the bullet and plough up all our cover crop to destroy the weed, so juggling it all can get pretty tricky! We have not used Roundup or any other herbicide for nearly two years, and our audit showed that we have no residual in our soil.

Our certifying body, Australian Certified Organic, will audit our vineyard on an annual basis, and we hope to achieve “in conversion” status in the next year or two, with full biodynamic status the year after.

Our winery has undertaken a separate audit, and is already certified to process organic fruit. The audit looked at the winemaking techniques that we employ and our record keeping. As for the vineyard, we had to change very little to achieve certified status, because we have always employed a minimalist approach in the winery.

Taking a holistic approach to wine-making is harder than

Vintage in the vineyard



Biodiversity: a baby bearded dragon



it sounds! To ensure the best quality wine has been made, we must put effort into growing the best fruit possible, be pedantic about winery sanitation and hygiene, and be super-vigilant throughout processing to ensure everything goes to plan. Sometimes this means getting out of bed on a chilly night to check that a ferment hasn't overheated, or spending two hours scrubbing equipment down after a twelve hour day pressing off new wine.

What does this mean for you, someone who enjoys our wine?

We will be carrying the "bud logo" on any of our eligible labels, indicating where the fruit has been certified organic or biodynamic. This is a verification mark that tells you we actually do undertake organic practices, unlike some other less specific types of labeling you see (for example "grown without chemicals", "no sprays" or "pesticide free"), and that we conform to an internationally recognized Australian standard for organic practices.

Whether you choose one of our wines with the bud logo or without, 919 will continue to aim for excellence in winemaking so that you continue to enjoy our wines.

Winemaker's Notebook (cont from p1)

Fortified varieties have similarly made great wines this year. Our Fino (apera) base, which was made from Palomino, has produced a delicate base wine. This has already been put under *flor* yeast for producing the fine and elegant apera style. Muscat this year was picked at 26 Baumé (a measure of sugar concentration – Ed.) and has made a very aromatic, rich and luscious style. Tokay (topaque) has this year made a fruit driven style with butterscotch, cold tea and oily notes. This wine will be put into old oak for ageing and will eventually be blended into a 919 Classic style.

Overall, the 2010 vintage has produced some magnificent wine for us, and this will translate into excellent value when these wines are released.

This month's recipe

Gourmet pizza

4 cups breadmaking flour
1 sachet of dried yeast
1 teaspoon honey
3 cups lukewarm water
1 teaspoon salt
5-6 organic sun-ripened tomatoes (homegrown are the best!)
100g sheep or goat milk fetta
100g kalamata olives
3-4 leaves of fresh basil

Method

Dissolve the honey in the water, then add the sachet of yeast to rehydrate for 15 minutes. Stir gently and allow to sit for another minute or two. Put the flour and salt into a large bowl and make a well in the centre. Add the yeast mix all in one go. Using a wooden spoon, mix the liquid through, gathering in dry flour. When the mix becomes too heavy to stir, tip out onto a floured surface. Gather it all together and knead (using the fold and quarter turn method) for about 10 minutes, or until the dough has the consistency of your ear lobe. Divide into three, and push each portion flat onto trays oiled with olive oil. Allow to rise until doubled. Heat the oven to 180°C. Scatter slices of tomato, olives, fetta and roughly torn basil over the top, with a little olive oil from the olives. Bake about 25 minutes until cooked, and serve with your favourite red or white wine for the perfect autumn lunch.

Our competition

Last newsletter, we asked you to tell us "What music do you like to listen to when drinking your favourite wines?"

We had so many entries that we ended up putting them all into a hat, and drawing out this month's winners, Tanya Allen and Paul Searle, who wrote:

Would have to be Michael Buble - just perfect for sipping at your wine overlooking the mighty Murray River.

Tim and Julia deserve an honourable mention for each of their entries. Thank you to everyone who responded.



Last month's winner, Paul Searle, with his prize pack.

Winter Warmer Offer

Keep warm this winter with our special 6-pack offer. In the pack you will receive one each of 2009 Petit Manseng, 2009 Vermentino, 2008 Shiraz and 2006 Durif, together with wine for before and after dinner – Apera and Tawny. The Winter Warmer pack is only \$150, a considerable saving from the regular price for these wines. Order your 919 Winter Warmer today!

Upcoming events @919

Hot August Night

Our fourth annual Hot August Night will be held Saturday 7th August this year. This is a night for our Cellar Club Members, where we release our current vintage wines and celebrate the depths of winter with wonderful food, local art and talented musicians.

Adelaide Market

919 will be at the Central Market on 18th June. Drop in and say hello!

Apology

We apologise to those who rang about our Mother's Day luncheon this year. The winery was just a little too full with ongoing vintage work, so we were unable to hold this event. Our intention is to reinstate our Mother's Day lunch in 2011.

Order 919

Place your order by text on 0408 855 272, by email to CellarDoor@919Wines.com.au, by fax on 08 8582 4478 or by post to PO Box 2071, Berri, SA 5343

Order forms can be downloaded from our website on:

www.919wines.com.au

Please be advised that the 2008 Sangiovese has sold out. Sangiovese will be unavailable until late 2010. We apologise for the inconvenience, but invite you to try other wines from our range at our cellar door.